Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims

Claim 1: (currently amended) A method for identifying mail pieces having postage sides for special processing based upon a plurality of predetermined profiles, the method comprising the steps of:

a) selecting a [[plurality]] combination of values for individual profile image characteristics to create [[for]] each one of the plurality of predetermined profiles, the values being chosen such that the combination is consistent with threat mail, the individual profile image characteristics being associated with various locations on the postage side of the mail piece;

b) storing the plurality of predetermined profiles, each of the predetermined profiles having values for the plurality of selected profile image characteristics;

c) obtaining mail piece image characteristics associated with an image of a mail piece;

d) retrieving one of the plurality of predetermined profiles that has not yet been used in a comparison;

e) comparing the mail piece image characteristics to the one of the plurality of predetermined profiles;

f) identifying the mail piece for special processing, if the one of the plurality of predetermined profiles substantially matches the mail piece image characteristics; and

g) repeating steps d) through f) for another one of the plurality of predetermined profiles, if the one of the plurality of predetermined profiles does not substantially match the mail piece image characteristics.

Claim 2: (cancelled)

Claim 3: (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of comparing the mail piece image characteristics to the one of the plurality of predetermined profiles occurs during real-time processing.

Claim 4: (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of comparing the mail piece image characteristics to the one of the plurality of predetermined profiles occurs during offline processing.

Claim 5: (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the plurality of predetermined profiles includes selected combinations of the plurality of profile image characteristics are selected from the group consisting of barcodes, address styles, address resolution, envelope size, initiating processing and distribution center, addressee, postage characteristics, markings, and handwriting characteristics.

Claim 6: (currently amended) A system enabling identification of mail pieces based upon predetermined profiles, the system comprising:

a detector and optical elements configured to obtain an image of a mail piece;

at least one processor configured to obtain mail piece image characteristics associated with the image of the mail piece;

at least one computer readable memory having:

(a) a database storing data for each one of a plurality of predetermined profiles, the data comprising:

[[an]] a profile identifier,

a plurality of profile image characteristics and associated values, the values being chosen such that the plurality of profile image characteristics is consistent with threat mail, the profile image characteristics being associated with various locations on the postage side of the mail piece, and[[,]]

an action identifier configured to specify a plurality of actions associated with the profile identified by the profile identifier each of said plurality of predetermined profiles; and,

(b) computer readable code embodied in the at least one computer readable memory, the computer readable code configured to cause the at least one processor to:

retrieve the data for one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the database,

compare the mail piece image characteristics to the one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the retrieved data,

identify the mail piece as requiring one of the plurality of actions identified by the action identifier from the retrieved data, if the mail piece image characteristics present in the retrieved data substantially match the one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the retrieved data.

Claim 7: (previously presented) The system of claim 6 wherein the computer readable code is further configured to cause the at least one processor to:

retrieve further data corresponding to another predetermined profile from the plurality of predetermined profiles from the database,

compare the mail piece image characteristics for the image of the mail piece to the values for one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the retrieved further data, and

identify the mail piece as requiring one of the plurality of actions identified by the action identifier from the retrieved further data, if the values for one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the retrieved data substantially matches the mail piece image characteristics for the image of the mail piece.

Claim 8: (previously presented) The system of claim 6 further comprising:

a network interface and a server configured to communicate with a network.

Claim 9: (previously presented) The system of claim 8 further comprising:

a remote server configured to receive and send the data.

Claim 10: (previously presented) The system of claim 7 wherein the plurality of predetermined profiles include selected combinations of the plurality of profile image characteristics selected from

the group consisting of barcodes, address styles, address resolution, envelope size, initiating

processing and distribution center, addressee, postage characteristics, markings, and handwriting

characteristics.

Claim 11: (currently amended) A system enabling identification of mail pieces based upon

predetermined profiles, the system comprising:

> a detector and optical elements configured to obtain an image of a mail piece;

> at least one processor configured to obtain mail piece image characteristics associated with

the image of the mail piece;

> a first computer readable memory for storing data for access by a process executed by at least

one processor, said memory comprising:

>> a database storing data for each one of a plurality of predetermined profiles, the data

comprising:

>>> [[an]] a profile identifier,

>>> values for a plurality of selected profile image characteristics, the values being

chosen such that the plurality of selected profile image characteristics is

consistent with threat mail, the plurality of selected profile image

characteristics being associated with various locations on the postage side of

the mail piece, and[[,]]

>>> an action identifier configured to specify a plurality of actions associated with

the profile identified by the profile identifier each of said plurality of

predetermined profiles;

> at least one second computer readable memory having computer readable code embodied

therein, the computer readable code configured to cause the at least one processor to:

>> retrieve the data for one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the database,

>> compare the mail piece image characteristics to the one of the plurality of

predetermined profiles from the retrieved data, and

>> identify the mail piece as requiring one of the plurality of actions identified by the

action identifier from the retrieved data, if the mail piece image characteristics present in the

retrieved data substantially match the one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the retrieved data.

Claim 12: (previously presented) The system of claim 11 wherein the computer readable code is further configured to cause the at least one processor to:

retrieve further data corresponding to another predetermined profile from the plurality of predetermined profiles from the database,

compare the mail piece image characteristics for the image of the mail piece to the values for one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the retrieved further data, and

identify the mail piece as requiring one of the plurality of actions identified by the action identifier from the retrieved further data, if the one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the retrieved data substantially matches the mail piece image characteristics for the image of the mail piece.

Claim 13: (previously presented) The system of claim 11 further comprising:

a network interface and a server configured to communicate with a network.

Claim 14: (previously presented) The system of claim 13 further comprising:

a remote server configured to receive and send the data.

Claim 15: (currently amended) The system of claim 11 wherein each of the ~~plurality of predetermined profiles includes selected combinations of the~~ ~~plurality of~~ profile image characteristics is selected from the group consisting of barcodes, address styles, address resolution, envelope size, initiating processing and distribution center, addressee, postage characteristics, markings, and handwriting characteristics.

Claim 16: (previously presented) The system of claim 14 wherein the remote server includes:

at least one third memory having computer readable code embodied therein, the computer readable code configured to cause the at least one processor to:

retrieve the data for one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the database,

compare the mail piece image characteristics for the image of the mail piece to the values for one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the retrieved data, and

identify the mail piece as requiring one of the plurality of actions identified by the action identifier from the retrieved data, if the one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the retrieved data substantially matches the mail piece image characteristics for the image of the mail piece.

Claim 17: (previously presented) The system of claim 16 wherein the computer readable code is further configured to cause the at least one processor to:

retrieve further data corresponding to another predetermined profile from the plurality of predetermined profiles from the database,

compare the mail piece image characteristics for the image of the mail piece to the one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the retrieved further data, and

identify the mail piece as requiring one of the plurality of actions identified by the action identifier from the retrieved further data, if the one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the retrieved data substantially matches the mail piece image characteristics for the image of the mail piece.

Claim 18: (previously presented) The system of claim 14 further comprising:

another memory for storing the data for access by a process executed by the remote server, said memory including a database.

Claim 19: (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said step of comparing can be executed with a subset of the plurality of the predetermined profiles simultaneously, and wherein said step of identifying the mail piece for special processing can result from a match from any one of the plurality of the predetermined profiles.

Claim 20: (previously presented) The system of claim 6 wherein said computer readable code is further configured to compare the mail piece image characteristics with a subset of the plurality of the predetermined profiles simultaneously, and wherein said computer readable code is further

configured to identify the mail piece for special processing if there is a match from any one of the plurality of the predetermined profiles.

Claim 21: (previously presented) The system of claim 11 wherein said computer readable code is further configured to compare the mail piece image characteristics with a subset of the plurality of the predetermined profiles simultaneously, and wherein said computer readable code is further configured to identify the mail piece for special processing if there is a match from any one of the plurality of the predetermined profiles.

Claim 22: (currently amended) A system for processing mail items and identifying mail items for special processing comprising:

    a transport sub-system configured to transport a mail item;

    an imaging sub-system configured to obtain an image of the mail piece;

    a database configured to store a plurality of predetermined profiles, each of the plurality of predetermined profiles having a plurality of selected profile image characteristics, the database including a combination of values for the selected profile image characteristics, the values being chosen such that the combination is consistent with threat mail, the selected profile image characteristics being associated with various locations on the postage side of the mail piece;

    a detector and optical elements configured to obtain at least one mail piece image characteristic characteristics associated with an image of the mail piece;

    computer readable code embodied in computer readable memory configured to retrieve the plurality of predetermined profiles;

    computer readable code embodied in computer readable memory configured to successively compare the mail piece image characteristics to each of the plurality of predetermined profiles until a match is found, if any; and

    computer readable code embodied in computer readable memory configured to identify the mail piece for special processing, if the one of the plurality predetermined profiles substantially matches the mail piece image characteristics for the image of the mail piece.

Claim 23: (currently amended) The system of claim 22 further comprising:

computer readable code configured to identify the mail piece as requiring one of [[the]] a plurality of actions identified by an action identifier from the retrieved other of the predetermined profiles, if the one of the plurality of predetermined profiles from the retrieved data substantially matches the mail piece image characteristics for the image of the mail piece.

Claim 24: (currently amended) The system of claim 22 wherein the ~~plurality of predetermined profiles include selected combinations of the plurality of~~ profile image characteristics are selected from the group consisting of barcodes, address styles, address resolution, envelope size, initiating processing and distribution center, addressee, postage characteristics, markings, and handwriting characteristics.

Claim 25: (previously presented) The system of claim 22 further comprising:
a network interface and a server configured to communicate with a network.

Claim 26: (previously presented) The system of claim 25 further comprising:
a remote server configured to receive and send the data.

Claim 27: (currently amended) The system of claim 22 wherein said computer readable code is further configured to compare the mail piece image characteristics with the combinations of values from more than one of ~~a subset of~~ the plurality of the predetermined profiles simultaneously, and wherein said computer readable code is further configured to identify the mail piece for special processing if there is a match from any one of the plurality of the predetermined profiles.

Claim 28: (previously presented) The system of claim 8 wherein said database is downloaded from the network.

Claim 29: (previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
modifying a result record associated with the image of the mail piece if the mail piece is flagged for the special processing;

transmitting the image to a remote site for manual image inspection according to the result record; and

classifying the mail piece based on the manual image inspection.

Claim 30: (currently amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

[[g)]] h) archiving the mail image having archived mail piece image characteristics;

[[h)]] i) updating the plurality of predetermined profiles by creating at least one new predetermined profile having a plurality of selected new profile image characteristics;

[[i)]] j) retrieving one of the new predetermined profiles that has not yet been used in the comparison;

[[j)]] k) comparing the archived mail piece image characteristics to the at least one new predetermined profile;

l) identifying the archived mail piece for the special processing, if the new predetermined profile substantially matches the archived mail piece image characteristics; and

m) repeating steps (i) through (l) for another one of the new predetermined profiles, if the new predetermined profile does not substantially matches the archived mail piece image characteristics.